



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER ♻

National Parks Conservation Association®
Protecting Parks for Future Generations®

**Testimony of Robert B. Keiter, Professor of Law and Director of the Wallace Stegner
Center for Land, Resources and the Environment, University of Utah**

Board of Trustees, National Parks Conservation Association

**Re: "Management of the National Parks and Parks of the Southwest"
before the
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources
of the House Government Reform Committee
U.S. House of Representatives**

**Flagstaff, Arizona
October 13, 2005**

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, it is with great honor and pleasure that I appear before you today to discuss the future of our national parks. I want to thank you for holding this important hearing to examine the challenges faced by national parks in the Southwest and for your interest and support of our nation's crown jewels -- our national parks.

My name is Robert Keiter. I am the Wallace Stegner Professor of Law and Director of the Wallace Stegner Center for Land, Resources, and the Environment at the University of Utah, where I teach in the areas of natural resources, public lands, constitutional law, and federal courts. I have written extensively on public land and natural resource law, including the publication of numerous books and articles, most recently "Keeping Faith with Nature: Ecosystems, Democracy, and America's Public Lands," a book that examines the evolution of public land policy during the past three decades, focusing on the emerging role of ecology in setting resource management priorities and standards.

I am here today in my capacity as a member of the National Parks Conservation Association Board of Trustees, on which I have served for the last seven years. Since 1919, the nonpartisan National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System. NPCA, our 300,000 members, and our many partners work together to protect the park system and preserve our nation's natural, historical, and cultural heritage for generations to come.

National parks in the Southwest exemplify the natural wonders and cultural treasures that we value as a nation. From the cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde to the rapids of the Grand Canyon, Southwestern national parks protect some of the nation's most valued assets. At the same time, these parks share the same funding challenges facing our national parks across the country.

Funding Challenges

One of the most pervasive challenges facing America's national parks is chronic under-funding. This problem did not occur overnight. Rather, it has grown over decades of inadequate funding under administrations and congresses of both parties.

Business plans developed in more than 70 national parks across the nation show that on average, parks operate with only two-thirds of the needed funding—a system-wide deficit in excess of \$600 million annually. Annual operating budgets of the national parks simply have not kept pace with needs. Compounding this problem are the increased security demands placed on the parks since September 11, 2001.

Individual park sites have also been forced to absorb a number of unbudgeted costs, including cost-of-living adjustments, storm damage, and other fixed costs. With the current surge in oil prices, the utility and vehicle fuel costs associated with managing the 388 national parks covering 83.6 million acres exacerbate the financial crunch placed on our parks. For example, El Malpais and El Moro national monuments in New Mexico have recently learned that their electric costs are about to double; other parks can expect similar challenges.

One only has to look at the recent storm damage caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita to see another example of financial strain on the Park Service. Not only do natural disasters like these have devastating consequences in terms of recovery and clean-up costs to the affected park sites, but they also wreak havoc on park personnel costs. National Park Service employees from across the nation have been temporarily deployed to Louisiana and Mississippi to aid in the recovery efforts at John Lafitte National Historical Park, New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park, and Gulf Islands National Seashore, among other parks. From superintendents - to interpreters - to law enforcement rangers, the relocation of Park Service personnel is further stretching the Park Service's resource protection and visitor service delivery capacity at the home parks of these personnel, as these individuals understandably are temporarily detailed to parklands affected by the hurricanes.

While the Park Service is still facing the budgetary ramifications of storm damage to national park units such as the Blue Ridge Parkway, damaged last year by hurricanes Charley and Frances, the damage to the parks affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita is likely to far eclipse those costs. As a result, the Park Service is once again forced to allocate its existing operations and maintenance funding to address the unbudgeted costs of storm damage. Congress has passed two emergency supplemental appropriation bills for hurricanes Katrina and Rita, but all monies have been allocated to FEMA and the military to-date. The Park Service is expected to receive monies from a future fiscal year 2006 emergency supplemental appropriations bill for facility infrastructure repair and other costs, but it is unlikely to cover the operating costs of personnel reassigned to help in the disaster recovery efforts, placing further strain on tight park budgets.

Homeland Security Demands

The Park Service's funding challenges are compounded by unfunded demands related to homeland security, which NPCA profiled in its 2005 report, *Faded Glory: Top 10 Reasons to Reinvest in America's National Heritage*. This is particularly prevalent in the national parks of the Southwest. The burden posed by border and homeland security demands on the Park Service is extensive. To the extent this situation does not change, funds for these activities will continue to drain needed resources from vital park management and protection functions and erode the experience that visitors can expect in many of our national parks.

Since September 11, 2001, the National Park Service has been forced to spend a substantial amount for national security in our parklands. Security-related operating costs of the Park Service have reached approximately \$40 million in annual recurring costs through fiscal year 2005, primarily in the nation's icon and border parks. Of this amount, \$14 million is attributed to the Park Police, which operated at the Statue of Liberty, at the National Mall in Washington, DC, and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco. The Park Service estimates it spends an extra \$63,000 every day the nation is at code orange alert. In 2003 alone, the Park Service was forced to use nearly \$8 million in fee receipts for increased security demanded by three code orange periods.

Construction costs associated with increased security needs at five locations - Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, and Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C; Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St Louis; and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument here in Arizona have totaled \$48 million since September 11, 2001. Unfortunately, the Park Service does not receive any compensation from the Department of Homeland Security for the costs it incurs and is forced to pay the bills by reducing resources devoted to resource protection and visitor services.

And these figures barely scratch the surface when it comes to the true fiscal impacts of unfunded homeland security demands on parks. For example, during heightened security periods Park Service employees are relocated to icon and border parks, both requiring increased travel costs, as well as reduced services in the parks from which the staff was relocated. These increased security demands placed on the Park Service's already strained budgets have resulted in many other needs in the parks going unmet.

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument – Homeland Security Case Study

Here in Arizona, the effects of increased homeland security demands on the parks are evident when looking at the budget of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, which NPCA included in 2004 on our list of America's 10 Most Endangered National Parks. While border security is not the responsibility of the National Park Service, the Park Service is entrusted to protect park resources from whatever threats arise. Parks along the border, such as Organ Pipe Cactus, have no choice but to engage in park protection activities related to border issues that threaten park resources and damage the experience of visitors. Nearly \$18 million in expenditures between fiscal years 2003 and 2005 have been allocated to build a vehicle barrier to increase security and protect the resources in the Organ Pipe, which were being heavily impacted

by vehicles coming over the border from Mexico. In addition, the Border Patrol is heavily engaged in interdiction activity within Organ Pipe.

The Border Patrol and the Park Service at Organ Pipe have been making important strides in coordinating their work, given their very different missions and expertise, but the park clearly is under-resourced to handle its significant challenges. For example, rather than engage in the types of resource management projects they handled in the past or interacting with visitors, Organ Pipe's resources staff now spend virtually all their time monitoring law enforcement impacts on the park itself—mapping incursions, evaluating impacts to soils and cacti, researching changes to the area's hydrology, and other associated projects. The park has 3-4 maintenance staff that spend virtually every working hour of every day maintaining certain roads in the park to facilitate movement of the Border Patrol, so those roads do not become impassable due to desert conditions and thereby encourage the creation of new roads in the wilderness. The park is forced to devote its scarce resources to border-related law enforcement activities rather than to serving visitors. The situation at Organ Pipe is so dire that the very existence of the park is being threatened. A review board convened after the tragic killing of park ranger Chris Eggle at Organ Pipe in 2002 concluded that "Illegal smuggling activities . . . are threatening the existence of the park and the fundamental agency mission to protect its employees, visitors and resources."

The budgetary impact of homeland security and border-related expenditures does not simply affect finances, staff, and visitors within border parks themselves, but also means fewer resources available to meet the needs of many other national park units. At Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico, for example, staffing shortages affect law enforcement and visitor safety services. Carlsbad has 76 full time filled positions—down from a high of 105 FTE several years ago. Carlsbad has 5 park rangers—1 chief ranger and 4 commissioned rangers—to protect and serve visitors throughout the 46,000-acre park. This makes it difficult for the park to engage in even limited backcountry patrols, and can be extremely frustrating for those unfortunate park visitors who experience problems like traffic accidents or theft.

Core Operations

As the Chairman knows, the National Park Service has initiated a new process to identify the "Core Operations" of each national park in an effort to provide parks more flexibility in their current budgets. Our understanding is that this process entails an intense process of inspection and introspection by park managers to determine which park activities and programs support the core mission of each park.

A decade ago, parks commonly allocated about 80 percent of their operating funds to so-called Personal Services, or the fixed salary and expenses attached to permanent staff. Because of the increase in pay grades (GS scale) for many park employees, the rising cost of retirements and other benefits, and the failure of successive Congresses and administrations adequately to budget for and fund these needs, parks now commonly spend nearly 90 percent of their limited budgets on personnel costs. This leaves little room to fund the ongoing expenses of running a park – fuel and repairs of ranger vehicles, seasonal rangers to run interpretive programs, and supplies and materials for resource managers. This is analogous to trying to run a

manufacturing company when all of your costs are tied to workers and no funds are left to purchase the materials necessary to make the products.

This clearly is an undesirable position for the Park Service, and it is a significant underlying reason why we have read in press reports this year that parks have been unable to afford a seasonal workforce and other essentials to running parks, especially during peak season. NPCA's longstanding position has been that this predicament demands more support from Congress and the administration – at least \$600 million in additional operating funds per year for the Park System. At the same time, we believe it is essential to find sensible management efficiencies wherever possible.

As a general proposition, we are inclined to support any initiative, including Core Operations Analysis, which improves efficiency in the parks, provided that initiative is consistent with the important mission of the National Park Service. As you know, Mr. Chairman, NPCA's Center for Park Management focuses exclusively on assisting park managers in implementing tools to enhance their effectiveness, leverage their resources best, and employ best practices demonstrated elsewhere. For example, the Center has worked with a number of parks improving fleet management and optimizing park fee collection activities.

As we understand the goal of Core Operations Analysis -- to facilitate a hard look by individual parks at how they prioritize their spending and resource allocations -- we believe Core Operations Analysis has the potential to provide a beneficial tool to the parks. However, we would offer several cautions as the Park Service continues to refine and experiment with this potentially significant process.

First, it would be unfortunate and unwise if core operations methodology were used by anyone, either in Congress, the Department of the Interior, or the Office of Management and Budget, to justify further reductions in services or resource protection activities within the parks. A park funded at the bare minimum is far from sufficient. NPCA does not believe such cuts are a goal of the Park Service. However, we would caution the agency to be extremely careful in how it characterizes items that may not be deemed "core," so they do not somehow become "expendable" in the eyes of the uninformed.

Second, important attributes of specific national parks may not be adequately spelled out in the originally authorizing legislation, but nonetheless may be critical elements of these parks' missions and equally important to the visitors who come to enjoy them. Many parks, for instance, were set aside for their outstanding scenery, wildlife, or archeological sites, but the authorizing legislation for many parks may not specifically state that educating the public about these resources is in fact one of the purposes of that park. Numerous polls have shown that interpretation is central to the enjoyment of a majority of park visitors, and its importance should not be diminished. Another example is Petrified Forest National Park. Petrified Forest originally was set aside to preserve its beautiful petrified wood, but we now have come to understand that the park is perhaps the premier place in the world for Triassic-era paleontology. Clearly, the Park Service should not, nor would we expect them to want to, define protection of paleontological resources at Petrified Forest as anything other than core.

As we push ahead to ensure that the parks receive the resources that clearly are needed, we also support challenging park staff to do some hard thinking about how their resources are organized and prioritized, which Core Operations Analysis has the potential to facilitate. The attempt to use these analyses to identify additional budget room for parks simply to operate is also a worthy goal, but we expect a sound and effective process to also identify many unmet needs at many parks, which will require the additional allocation of resources. The Park Service must be careful that the political process does not somehow subvert the worthwhile intent of Core Operations Analysis. Otherwise this becomes an exercise that places parks on a slow starvation diet that keeps their hearts beating, but fails to cure the disease at is affecting them. The American public expects our national parks to thrive, not merely to survive.

National Parks in the Southwest

The national parks in the Southwest face the same budgetary challenges as parks throughout the nation. As the *Arizona Republic* wrote in April 2004: “You don't have to look far to see how our National Park System is fraying. Check out the water pipeline to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, built in 1927 and in desperate need of replacement. Walk the eroding trails at Petrified Forest. See how illegal immigration and drug trafficking are tearing up the landscape at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. Chronic shortfalls in funding are eating away at our National Park System.”

Grand Canyon National Park

The immense and colorful Grand Canyon is one of the world's most powerful and inspiring scenic landscapes. While Grand Canyon National Park is one of the nation's most visited parks, with nearly 4.7 million visitors last year, it faces the same funding challenges afflicting the Park Service as a whole. Insufficient operations and maintenance funding is plaguing Grand Canyon, putting the park's fragile resources at risk.

Grand Canyon Operations

The base operating budget for Grand Canyon National Park over the past five years has failed to come close to meeting inflation, having increased from \$18.2 million in fiscal year 2001 to \$19.6 million in fiscal year 2006--increasing only a total of seven percent over five years. When factoring in the park's purchasing power, the park is actually losing ground.

A consequence of this shortfall can be seen when looking at the protection of archeological resources at Grand Canyon. The park has recorded more than 3,940 archeological sites and artifacts that tell the story of Grand Canyon's 10,000-year old human history. However, only three percent of the park has been adequately surveyed, compromising the protection of sites yet to be discovered.

Unmet Project Needs at Grand Canyon

According to the Park Service's Project Management Information System (PMIS) list of maintenance projects, the Grand Canyon has a total of \$238 million in unfunded projects,

ranging from the rehabilitation cultural landscapes at Kolb Studio to the restoration of North Rim trails. A small sample of examples include:

- The Hermit road on the South Rim provides visitors with access to Hermit Rest, a remote cabin that is also the starting point for a popular backcountry trail. The rehabilitation of this road, the surface of which has crumbled so badly in some spots that it resembles a broken potato chip, will cost nearly \$9 million dollars. But there is concern that the cuts to the president's requested funding for the Park Roads program in the transportation reauthorization act recently passed by Congress will delay the start and completion of this project, thereby inhibiting visitor service.
- Along the banks of the Colorado River in the park, archeologists have identified 10 prehistoric sites that are being threatened by erosion due to lack of sediment deposits by the water flow. The Park Service needs \$1.2 million to excavate and study these sites before they are unearthed and their ancient artifacts are washed away, but the funds are not yet available.
- The park's overflight and soundscape management plan, listed as a \$2.4 million unfunded item on the park's PMIS database, needs to be completed if the park ever hopes to meet the mandate of Senator McCain's 1987 national park overflight management act, which required the substantial restoration of natural quiet in the canyon. An alternative dispute resolution process to address this overflight act's as-yet unmet goal of natural quiet restoration is currently underway. It involves the Park Service, the Federal Aviation Administration, air tour operators, conservationists, and tribal representatives. Funding of the plan, however, is still necessary.

The subcommittee may wish to examine a more detailed list of the park's unfunded cultural and natural resource research needs, which is available online at cpcesu.nau.edu/new/pmis/GRCA2pmis.htm.

Given the scope of the unmet needs in Grand Canyon, it is not surprising that Park officials announced last month that entry fees into the park will be increased from \$20 to \$25 next year.

While private philanthropies, such as the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, provide important project funding to fill in some of the gaps at the park, this funding must supplement, not replace, the federal responsibility to support our nation's most treasure natural and cultural public lands through the appropriations and budget processes.

State of the Parks Case Studies (Bryce Canyon, Canyonlands, Zion)

In 2000, NPCA initiated the State of the Parks program to assess the condition of natural and cultural resources in the parks, and to determine how well equipped the National Park Service is to protect the parks – its stewardship capacity. The goal is to provide information that will help policymakers, the public, and the National Park Service improve conditions in national parks, celebrate successes as model for other parks, and ensure a lasting legacy for future

generations. Working with national parks through NPCA's Center for the State of the Parks over the past five years, NPCA has produced 25 reports focused on diverse natural and cultural parks across the nation.

Looking at three national parks in my home state of Utah, Bryce Canyon National Park, Canyonlands National Park, and Zion National Park, we find many of the same challenges. State of the Parks reports for all three have been produced within the past year, with the Zion report completed most recently in July of 2005.

Canyonlands National Park

Established in September 1964, Canyonlands National Park protects prehistoric petroglyphs, ruins, and nearly 340,000 breathtaking acres of the Colorado Plateau, where the Green and Colorado rivers meet to form one of North America's most biologically diverse eco-regions. Canyonlands is home to 628 species of plants, 31 fish, ten amphibians, 25 reptiles, 218 birds, and 81 mammals. Rock art, granaries, cowboy camps, and ancient artifacts tell the stories of past human inhabitants in the park. Because the park is located far away from major population centers and development, today's visitors experience many of the same vistas as early explorers, relatively unchanged after thousands of years. Dark night skies and natural soundscapes give visitors a sense of the park's wildness.

The September 2004 State of the Parks report found that Canyonlands' overall stewardship capacity – the Park Service's ability to protect resources at the Canyonlands National Park – rated a "poor" score of 60 out of 100. The report concluded that inadequate staffing and an annual funding shortfall of \$2 million is limiting the ability of the Park Service to address the park threats and meet the needs of nearly 400,000 visitors annually. Insufficient funding impairs the park's ability to assess and protect the areas vast archeological heritage, including ancient petroglyphs and nearly 700,000 museum objects that chronicle 11,000 years of human history. The park needs nearly \$36 million for deferred maintenance projects and 171 identified unfunded projects. More than \$4.2 million are needed for cultural resource projects, including a park-wide cultural resource inventory, ethnographic overview, and condition reviews for high priority structures identified on the List of Classified Structures. With a base operating budget of merely \$5.3 million, these unmet needs represent a tremendous challenge to the park to meet its mission.

In addition, the report found Canyonlands to be vulnerable to extensive road claims in its backcountry related to the Revised Statute 2477, which was enacted before Yellowstone was designated as a national park and was repealed roughly 30 years ago. R.S. 2477 would subject sensitive areas of the park to a potential level of vehicular use that the Park Service has determined would be unduly harmful.

Bryce Canyon National Park

First proclaimed a national monument in June 1923, Bryce Canyon National Park includes 35,835 acres of breathtaking spires, hoodoos, and windows carved by wind from color sedimentary rock. Bryce is composed of a series of 14 amphitheaters located along the rim of

the Paunsaugunt Plateau, home to more than 500 plant species and many bird and mammal species, telling the story of humans who have lived in the area of thousands of years.

NPCA's June 2005 State of the Parks Report found that Bryce Canyon's annual budget of \$2.7 million falls approximately \$1.8 million short of what is needed annually to adequately maintain popular trails, educate visitors, and protect the nearly 40,000 museum artifacts such as American Indian artifacts and historic furnishings. The report rated Bryce Canyon's overall stewardship capacity as "poor," for a score of only 44 out of 100. Funding constraints have resulted in the Park Service's inability to fund several critical staff positions at Bryce Canyon, including cultural resource experts, trail maintenance staff, biological technicians, law enforcement rangers, interpreters, and a geologist. At current funding levels, rangers at Bryce must focus on the immediate needs of visitors, with most of their time spent on search-and-rescue calls, medical calls, traffic patrols, and fires. As a result, they are able only to provide minimal proactive attention to park resources.

Zion National Park

Zion, one of the earliest additions to the National Park System, enjoys millions of visitors annually and manages an exemplary transportation system, which makes it easy for visitors to keep coming back. Zion is probably best known for its geologic features that include deep canyons and rock towers interspersed with high plateaus and mesas. Zion's location at the intersection of three biophysical provinces, as well as its elevation gradient from lowlands at 3,700 feet to maintains that peak at 8,726 feet, combine to create conditions ideal for a multitude of plant and animal species. The park protects 894 species of plants, 78 species of mammals, 290 species of birds, 44 species of reptiles and amphibians, and four native species of fish. Human use of Zion Canyon dates back at least 8,000 years, to people who hunted and gathered and those who later farmed the fertile land along the Virgin River.

Our July 2005 State of the Parks report found that the park's stewardship capacity to rate "poor," a score of 60 out of 100. While overall conditions of Zion's natural resources rated "good" 82 out of 100, the park's cultural resources rated "poor" 54 out of 100. The park's operational budget is \$3.5 million short of what is needed to adequately care for the resources and provide visitor services. With an existing base operating budget of only \$6.2 million, this funding shortfall is alarming.

As a result of this shortfall, important resource protection projects go unfunded, and the park cannot afford to hire critical staff positions to support basic resource management functions. For example, Zion's interpretive staff is comprised of 8 full time employees, 10 seasonal employees, and one volunteer – a ratio of roughly 1 interpreter for every 105,000 park visitors. The interpretive staff at Zion educates visitors about the park resources, its human history, and helps to instill an appreciation and understanding of the park and its importance to America's heritage. However, because Zion lacks the funding to hire more staff, the number daily guided trail walks and ranger talks have been cut in half, no interpretive rangers are present at trailheads or the Zion lodge, and the park has been forced to deny ranger programs to school groups.

Southwest National Parks' Base Operating Budgets at a Glance

When reviewing the base operating budgets of the national park sites in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada, you find a similar trend to the budgets of parks across the nation—base operating budgets simply are not keeping pace with the need. As you will note in the chart (Appendix 1), only six of the 45 parks in the Southwest are slated for base increases above the rate of inflation in the fiscal year 2006 budget: Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona; Bandelier National Park and Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument in New Mexico; and Arches National Park, Timpanogos Cave National Monument, and Zion National Park in Utah. And these parks are receiving only very modest increases, slightly above inflation. For example, Grand Canyon National Park is slated to receive a 3.5 percent increase in the 2006 fiscal year, compared to an inflation rate of 3.1 percent. As fortunate as Grand Canyon is to receive this small increase at a time of such fiscal austerity, the park continues to face enormous challenges.

Overall, the Southwestern national parks are slated on average to receive an increase of only 2.5 percent to their base operating budget in the current 2006 fiscal year that began on October 1—more than half a percentage point below inflation. When factoring in a 3.1 percent rate of inflation, and adding to that the increased demands placed on the Park Service from the recent natural disasters in the Gulf region, it is no wonder the Park Service is unable to keep up with the needs of the parks.

While the parks did receive helpful increases to their base operating budgets in the 2005 fiscal year, by the time those appropriations reached the bottom line in most parks, many parks actually lost purchasing power. And unfortunately, despite doing better than much of the public land agencies within the Department of the Interior in the fiscal year 2006 appropriations bill, the Park Service was not able to sustain what little momentum they appeared to gain last year. Truly addressing the parks' annual operating shortfall requires a sustained effort to provide significant increase in the rate of investment in annual operating funding over a period of years, in addition to identifying management efficiencies in the parks. Absent this, our parks at best are merely treading water, and in most cases they are losing ground.

Economic Benefits of National Parks in the Southwest

According to the National Park Service, the national parks generate about \$11 billion in economic impacts each year in tourism revenue alone. The parks generate over 226,000 tourism related jobs in local economies, not to mention their additional positive economic impact on communities.

National parks play a critical role both in the identity and the economy of the Southwest. More than 36 million tourists visited the national parks in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada in 2003. These visitors spent over \$1.6 billion in the parks and gateway communities, supported over 39,000 jobs, and generated over \$653 million in personal income for our communities, \$377 million in Arizona alone. I have included a chart (Appendix 2) showing these economic impacts. As you can see, the national parks in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada the Southwest have a tremendous economic impact in the region.

Specifically, Grand Canyon National Park is one of the most visited national parks in the country, and is vitally important to the northern Arizona and the regional economy. According to a recent report by the National Park Service and Michigan State University (MSU), “Economic Impacts of Grand Canyon National Park, Visitor Spending on the Local Economy” released in January 2005, park visitors spent \$338 million within the local region in 2003, including \$137 million inside the park and \$201 million in gateway communities. Using MSU’s Money Generation Model, the study found that when secondary effects are included, the total economic impacts of visitor spending at Grand Canyon in 2003 was \$429 million in direct sales, \$157 million in personal income, \$245 million value added, and almost 7,500 local jobs attributable to the visitation at the park.

The Case for Land Acquisition – Petrified Forest National Park

Petrified Forest National Park, originally proclaimed a national monument by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, is located in northeastern Arizona. It was originally set aside to preserve the concentration of rainbow-hued petrified wood, scenic landscapes of the Painted Desert, rare shortgrass prairie, and more than 500 archeological and historical sites that reflect a 10,000-year continuum of human history. The park’s 93,500 acres protect the world’s largest and most colorful concentrations of petrified wood. It is, according to paleontologists, the world’s gold standard for Triassic-era paleontology.

With strong leadership from Congressman Renzi and Senators McCain and Kyl, and with broad bipartisan support, Congress passed, and President Bush signed into law on December 3, 2004, the Petrified Forest National Park Expansion Act of 2004. This legislation authorized the expansion of this remarkable park by 128,000, providing the opportunity to protect in perpetuity the area’s world-class paleontological and archeological resources for future generations. Although an important step in protecting these priceless resources, the legislation was by no means the end of that effort. Now the challenge is to ensure these lands actually are added to the park through donation, exchange or purchase.

A number of the landowners at Petrified Forest are potentially interested in exchanging their land, which we hope can be done as expeditiously as possible. However, it is clear that some of these lands will have to be purchased as well, as authorized by the legislation. Unfortunately, funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the federal tool for purchasing such important lands, has been slashed in recent years. While federal LWCF funding for National Park Service acquisitions achieved a high watermark of \$130 million in fiscal year 2002, Congress appropriated only \$45 million for national park land acquisition in the recently enacted fiscal year 2006 Interior Appropriations bill.

The expansion of Petrified Forest was significant in that it had the wholehearted support of the local community, the landowners who owned the vast bulk of the expansion area, the administration, the state, and a bipartisan group of legislators in the House and Senate. It would be a tragedy if the necessary follow-through to acquire these lands for the park were hampered because of the unavailability of needed LWCF funds.

Not only does the Petrified Forest case speak to the need for better funding of LWCF, but it also shows how a park addition can actually help facilitate more efficient management and resource protection. For example, the additions will better facilitate the protection of the park's remarkable resources from looting. With the use of modern technology, the park is able to use relatively low-cost sensing technology to help police against looters. But this can only be done effectively once the necessary acquisitions occur. As the administration prepares its fiscal year 2007 budget, we strongly encourage the Park Service to request the necessary funds to begin making progress toward the necessary and newly authorized acquisitions at the park. We encourage Arizona's Congressional leadership to work with the White House and their Congressional colleagues toward this important goal.

Vanishing Treasures Program – A Model of Success

One program critical to the support of national parks in the Southwest is the Vanishing Treasures Program. The Vanishing Treasures Program was initiated in 1993, when the National Park Service identified and began acting upon a critical weakness that was threatening the existence of unique, rare, and irreplaceable prehistoric and historic ruins in a number of Park Service units in the western United States. To quote a National Park Service 2004 Year End Report, "After 20 years of inadequate funding, backlogged treatment needs, and a lack of information on condition, thousands of prehistoric and historic ruins at 44 National Park Service units in the arid west were identified as being threatened with severe deterioration and loss if immediate action was not taken."

The Vanishing Treasures program has been critical to the Park Service's cultural resource stewardship efforts to save priceless cultural resources in Southwestern parks. At the end of FY 2003, more than \$8.7 million in federal funds had been provided to the National Park Service through the program. For example, the Vanishing Treasures program has enabled Grand Canyon National Park to hire an archeologist to manage the condition of prehistoric ruins and historic masonry buildings located in the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. In FY 2005, with monies from the Vanishing Treasures program, El Mapais National Monument was able to hire six seasonal masons from the nearby Pueblos of Acoma and Zuni in order to stabilize the prehistoric Pueblo and historic homestead.

NPCA strongly supports the Vanishing Treasures program and encourages Congress not only to continue, but also increase, financial support for this important program. The program represents a success story in the continuing and never-ending effort to protect and preserve our nation's cultural heritage. As Glenn Fulfer, superintendent of Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, a park that preserves and interprets the best remaining examples of the 17th-century Spanish Franciscan mission churches states: "The Vanishing Treasures program is a last defense against the loss of these tangible symbols of America's heritage."

It would greatly complement the Vanishing Treasures Initiative if Congress would pass the National Park Centennial Act. As you are well aware Mr. Chairman, in addition to your leadership with this important legislation, three members of the Arizona delegation in the House of Representatives have sponsored the bill: Representatives Renzi, Grijalva, and Pastor; Senator McCain introduced the companion measure in the Senate. The bill would establish a "Cultural Resource Challenge," similar to the Park Service's Natural Resource Challenge, which is

designed to fund the protection of cultural resources, including the documentation and preservation of archeological sites within the national parks.

Budget Reconciliation Threat to the Parks

Current federal budgetary pressures have the potential to further jeopardize national parks. Recently, the House Resources Committee Chairman drafted legislation that could require the sale and development of 15 national parks for energy and commercial purposes, and turn the parks that would remain into commercial billboards. The sites subject to sale under the proposal honor Revolutionary War heroes, African American leaders, and American Indian culture, as well as preserve magnificent Alaskan wilderness and wildlife, priceless archeological sites, and even an additional memorial to our greatest conservation president, Theodore Roosevelt. Closing these parks would rip significant pages from our American story, but could also devastate Native subsistence economies in parts of Alaska, as well as affect local economies in other areas that rely on visitors to these parks to generate annual tourism revenue. These 15 parks make up approximately 23 percent of the total park system acreage—which is already only 2 percent of U.S. public lands.

Equally troubling, the proposal would commercialize all national parks if this proposal were to become law. The draft requires the National Park Service to sell commercial advertising in all Park Service Official Maps and Guides, and on the exterior and interior of all buses, shuttles, vans, trams, and passenger ferries operated within the National Park System. If this generates less than \$10 million in advertising revenue annually, every park unit in the system would lose access to its recreation fee monies under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, which would be placed in moratorium. Currently, the parks collect more than \$150 million annually in critically needed fee monies. Additionally, the proposal requires the Park Service to solicit and sell commercial sponsorship of park visitor centers, education centers, information centers, museums, trails, auditoriums, amphitheaters, and theatres throughout the National Park System. As a result, the Grand Canyon's Bright Angel Trail could be renamed the Citibank Trail. And if the Park Service failed to sell at least \$10 million in sponsorships, all authority provided under the National Park Service Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998 would be in moratorium.

NPCA recently commissioned a poll by Zogby International to gauge public opinion on these proposals. Eighty-four percent of respondents opposed the sale of commercial naming rights—70 percent strongly opposed such sales. Seventy four percent opposed the sale of commercial advertising in park brochures and on park vehicles, and 79 percent opposed the closure and sale of national park units. The public has spoken clearly on this issue, and NPCA will do everything necessary to ensure that such misguided proposals are defeated.

Congress and the administration have a responsibility to protect our national heritage. However, this proposal would put our American heritage on the auction block. It should be rejected outright.

Management Policy Revisions

As you know, led by a political appointee at the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service is considering proposed changes to its management policies. Individually and cumulatively, these contemplated changes would radically alter the Park Service's interpretation of its mission and of the fundamental purpose of the National Park System. For almost 90 years, preservation of the parks has been clearly established as the Park Service's primary mission. Mr. Hoffman's draft policy changes, however, would change that mission and permit the parks to be used in ways inconsistent with the preservation as their predominant purpose. The proposed rewrite of the management policies, if permitted to take effect, would harm national parks from Gettysburg to Yellowstone to the Grand Canyon, and compromise the experiences of present and future generations of Americans. We would remind the subcommittee of the testimony of former Park Service Director Russell Dickenson, who led the Park Service throughout the first Reagan term and before, during, and after the tenure of Interior Secretary Watt. Mr. Dickenson stated that, "not even in the most challenging days of the 'Watt era' did we face anything as potentially damaging to the national parks" as the Hoffman effort.

As the nation's leading park advocacy organization, NPCA shares the concerns expressed by park professionals and retirees that the Hoffman draft revisions depart radically from the fundamental stewardship ethic that has preserved our national parks from their beginning. We question the urgency with which the Department of Interior appears to be pursuing these extensive modifications to the management policies of the Park Service, which were last modified only four years ago. Over the past 25 years, the Park Service's fundamental management policies have been revised only twice – in 1988 during the Reagan administration and in 2001 during the Clinton administration. Both versions underwent extensive professional review and were issued to the public for comment for extended periods, and both were identical in their interpretation of the meaning of the key language in the National Park Service Organic Act.

Heeding the advice of National Park Service professionals who have effectively managed our national heritage for decades, we strongly oppose, and urge the Department of Interior to abandon, the proposed management policies rewrite. With the Park Service so strapped for resources at this time, it should only be required to engage in such a process, with significant fiscal and policy ramifications, if it is absolutely necessary. We do not believe a case has been made for revising these policies now, and any policy changes should be conducted in an open, careful, deliberative process, starting with a scoping process that allows for broad public input and vetting of any changes.

It appears, nevertheless, that the Park Service has been instructed to prepare a revision to the Hoffman draft, which we expect to be released very shortly. While we question the rationale for modifying the policies at all, we sincerely hope that draft will reject the multitude of extreme proposals in the Hoffman draft.

If the Department pursues a rewrite of the policies, it will be critically important that any changes are made extremely carefully and deliberately. If the Department directs the Park Service to pursue changes to the policies, significant public comment will be critical to ensure

any proposals are well understood and necessary. A quick comment period following a Federal Register notice, when prior modifications under both Republican and Democratic administrations have taken years, would be a disservice to the American people and to our national heritage. Thus far, the process being used to rewrite the policies is unprecedented in the history of the Park Service. Revisions to the management policies should not be politically driven.

As Pulitzer Prize winning author Wallace Stegner reminds us, the idea of national parks was “the best idea America ever had.” The Congress, at the time it established the National Park System in 1916, expressly stated the “fundamental purpose” of the Park System is “to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.” Since then, Congress has consistently reaffirmed that the Park Service is charged with administering the Park System in conformity with this “fundamental purpose.” And in defining the Park Service’s legal obligations, the courts have regularly endorsed that same interpretation of the agency’s mission. It is abundantly clear, therefore, that the primary purpose of the Park System is preservation, so that our grandchildren may experience these places as you and I do today.

Mr. Hoffman’s effort to rewrite the Park Service’s management policies would undermine the very essence of the National Park System and to jeopardize that legacy. Any proposed or final revision to the Park Service’s management policies must therefore reject such changes.

Conclusion

The national parks are at the core of our national identity. The parks of the Southwest protect some of our country’s most spectacular and treasured natural and cultural resources, as well as provide us with unparalleled recreational and educational opportunities.

The National Park Service is entrusted with a great responsibility -- to preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. However, the severe fiscal challenges facing our parks today are undermining this important mission.

In a little more than ten years, America will celebrate the National Park Service’s 100th anniversary. Our national parks are special places and deserve our steadfast support. The creation of the first parks and the Park System required bold vision on the part of our leaders, who thankfully had the foresight to realize the necessity for protecting and preserving the many poignant examples of our nation’s heritage. Their gift to us, which we must pass on to future generations, can only be ensured if we take the same bold action to address the many challenges facing our parks today, including the severe fiscal challenges and management threats that they confront.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this important series of hearings. I am happy to answer any questions.

Appendix 1

Base Operating Budget for Arizona NPS Units NPS FY 2004 – FY 2006 (all dollar amounts in thousands)

Unit	FY 04 Enacted	FY 05 Estimate	Increase FY 04 to FY 05	% Increase	FY 06 Request	Increase FY 05 to FY 06	% Increase	% Gap Between Inflation and Funding Request for FY 06*	Change In Real Dollars From FY 05 Estimate to FY 06 Request**
Canyon de Chelly NM	1,343	1,509	166	11	1,539	30	2	-1.1	-18
Casa Grande Ruins NM & Hohokam Pima NM	653	773	120	15.5	792	19	2.4	-0.7	-6
Chiricahua NM & Ft Bowie NHS	1,334	1,464	130	8.9	1,511	47	3.1	0.0	0
Coronado Nmem	937	961	24	2.5	977	16	1.6	-1.5	-14
Glen Canyon NRA	9,256	9,848	592	6	10,072	224	2.2	-1.4	-88
Grand Canyon NP	18,567	18,921	354	1.9	19,599	678	3.5	0.4	70
Hubbell Trading Post NHS	683	719	36	5	739	20	2.7	-0.4	-3
Lake Mead NRA	14,085	14,432	347	2.4	14,763	331	2.2	-1.4	-127
Montezuma Castle NM & Tuzigoot NM	1,118	1,148	30	2.6	1,186	38	3.2	0.1	1
Navajo NM	758	858	100	11.7	875	17	1.9	-1.2	-10
Organ Pipe Cactus NM	3,070	3,267	197	6	3,328	61	1.8	-1.3	-42
Petrified Forest NP	2,534	2,768	234	8.5	2,845	77	2.7	-0.4	-11
Pipe Spring NM	656	676	20	3	696	20	2.9	-0.2	2
Saguaro NP	2,821	3,094	273	8.8	3,193	99	3.1	0.0	0
Tonto NM	726	768	42	5.5	790	22	2.8	-0.3	2
Tumacacori NHP	745	915	170	18.6	937	22	2.3	-0.8	-7
Average				7.4			2.5		

*Based on 3.11% rate of inflation.

**The FY 06 request provided an increase of \$50.5 million to National Park System operations. The final FY 2006 Conference provided an increase of \$60.5 million, subject to a across the board cut of 0.476 percent.

**Base Operating Budget for Nevada NPS Units
NPS FY 2004 – FY 2006 (all dollar amounts in thousands)**

Unit	FY 04 Enacted	FY 05 Estimate	Increase FY 04 to FY 05	% Increase	FY 06 Request	Increase FY 05 to FY 06	% Increase	% Gap Between Inflation and Funding Request for FY 06*	Change In Real Dollars From FY 05 Estimate to FY 06 Request**
Death Valley NP	6,790	6,957	167	2.4	7,126	167	2.3	-0.8	-52
Great Basin NP	1,894	1,944	50	2.6	2,003	59	2.9	-0.2	-3
Lake Meade NRA	14,085	14,432	347	2.4	14,763	331	2.2	-0.9	-127
Average				2.5			2.5		

*Based on 3.11% rate of inflation.

**The FY 06 request provided an increase of \$50.5 million to National Park System operations. The final FY 2006 Conference provided an increase of \$60.5 million, subject to a across the board cut of 0.476 percent.

**Base Operating Budget for New Mexico NPS Units
NPS FY 2004 – FY 2006 (all dollar amounts in thousands)**

Unit	FY 04 Enacted	FY 05 Estimate	Increase FY 04 to FY 05	% Increase	FY 06 Request	Increase FY 05 to FY 06	% Increase	% Gap Between Inflation and Funding Request for FY 06*	Change In Real Dollars From FY 05 Estimate to FY 06 Request**
Aztec Ruins NM	960	1,013	53	5.2	1,041	28	2.7	-0.4	-4
Bandelier NM	2,491	2,549	58	2.3	2,654	105	4	0.9	23
Capulin Volcano NM	609	651	42	6.5	667	16	2.4	-0.7	-5
Carlsbad Caverns NP	5,231	5,343	112	2.1	5,486	143	2.6	-0.5	-28
Chaco Culture NHP	1,764	1,950	186	9.5	1,990	40	2	-1.1	-22
El Malpais NM	1,041	1,116	75	6.7	1,150	34	3	-0.1	-2
El Morro NM	558	573	15	2.6	586	13	2.2	-0.9	-5
Fort Union NM	674	773	99	12.8	793	20	2.5	-0.6	-5
Gila Cliff Dwellings NM	216	370	154	41.6	374	4	1.1	-2.0	-8
Pecos NHP	1,291	1,324	33	2.5	1,352	28	2.1	-1.0	-12
Petroglyph NM	1,597	1,478	-119	-8.1	1,512	34	2.2	-0.9	-13
Salinas Pueblo Missions NM	1,201	1,234	33	2.7	1,277	43	3.4	0.3	3
White Sands NM	1,351	1,387	36	2.6	1,421	34	2.4	-0.7	-10

*Based on 3.11% rate of inflation.

**The FY 06 request provided an increase of \$50.5 million to National Park System operations. The final FY 2006 Conference provided an increase of \$60.5 million, subject to a across the board cut of 0.476 percent.

Base Operating Budget for Utah NPS Units
NPS FY 2004 – FY 2006 (all dollar amounts in thousands)

Unit	FY 04 Enacted	FY 05 Estimate	Increase FY 04 to FY 05	% Increase	FY 06 Request	Increase FY 05 to FY 06	% Increase	% Gap Between Inflation and Funding Request for FY 06*	Change In Real Dollars From FY 05 Estimate to FY 06 Request**
Arches National Park	1,140	1,168	28	2.4	1,215	47	3.9	0.8	9
Bryce Canyon National Park	2,674	2,768	94	3.4	2,848	80	2.8	-0.3	-8
Canyonlands National Park	5,334	5,294	40	0.8	5,442	148	2.7	-0.4	-21
Capitol Reef National Park	1,856	1,923	67	3.5	1,977	54	2.7	-0.4	-7
Cedar Breaks National Monument	346	354	8	2.3	364	10	2.7	-0.4	-1
Dinosaur National Monument	2,777	2,865	88	3.1	2,943	78	2.7	-0.4	-13
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area	9,256	9,848	592	6	10,072	224	2.2	-0.9	-88
Golden Spike National Historic Site	698	884	186	21	901	17	1.9	-1.2	11
Hovenweep National Monument	493	506	13	2.6	512	6	1.2	-1.9	10
Natural Bridges National Monument	432	444	12	2.7	457	13	2.8	-0.3	-1
Rainbow Bridge National Monument	101	104	3	2.9	104	0	0	-3.1	-3
Timpanogos Cave National Monument	703	744	41	5.5	782	38	4.9	1.8	14
Zion National Park	6,008	6,153	145	2.4	6,396	243	3.8	0.7	45
Average				4.5			2.6		

*Based on 3.11% rate of inflation.

**The FY 06 request provided an increase of \$50.5 million to National Park System operations. The final FY 2006 Conference provided an increase of \$60.5 million, subject to a across the board cut of 0.476 percent.

Appendix 2

Arizona 2003 Economic Impacts of National Park System*

Unit	Recreation Visits	Total Visitor Spending	Average Spending Per Party Day	Local Jobs Created	Personal Income Generated
Canyon de Chelly NM	866,498	\$39,810	\$90	989	\$17,310
Casa Grande Ruins NM	87,687	\$2,280	\$65	57	\$790
Chiricahua NM	44,976	\$2,050	\$83	51	\$880
Coronado NMem	89,309	\$2,750	\$62	73	\$1,010
Ft Bowie NHS	8,445	\$370	\$89	10	\$160
Glen Canyon NRA	1,876,984	\$108,530	\$77	2,564	\$45,270
Grand Canyon NP	4,124,900	\$338,130	\$211	7,812	\$169,810
Hubbell Trading Post NHS	163,883	\$7,220	\$89	180	\$3,130
Lake Mead NRA	7,915,581	\$240,360	\$100	5,815	\$81,890
Montezuma Castle NM	637,024	\$28,060	\$89	697	\$12,190
Navajo NM	76,620	\$3,390	\$88	84	\$1,470
Organ Pipe Cactus NM	277,566	\$12,370	\$86	306	\$5,350
Petrified Forest NP	586,245	\$36,130	\$111	910	\$15,960
Pipe Spring NM	56,341	\$2,480	\$89	62	\$1,080
Saguaro NP	643,697	\$39,670	\$110	998	\$17,520
Tonto NM	59,216	\$2,610	\$89	65	\$1,130
Tumacacori NHP	52,393	\$1,620	\$62	43	\$590
Tuzigoot NM	115,216	\$5,080	\$89	126	\$2,200
Totals	17,682,581	\$872,910	\$93	20,842	\$377,740

* Economic impacts where estimated using the MSU Money Generation Model (MGM2).

Nevada 2003
Economic Impacts of National Park System*

Unit	Recreation Visits	Total Visitor Spending	Average Spending Per Party Day	Local Jobs Created	Personal Income Generated
Death Valley NP	890,375	\$40,120	\$74	1,059	\$14,750
Great Basin NP	87,020	\$3,830	\$71	101	\$1,400
Lake Meade NRA	7,915,581	\$240,360	\$100	5,815	\$81,890
Totals	8,892,976	\$284,310	\$82	6,975	\$98,040

* Economic impacts where estimated using the MSU Money Generation Model (MGM2).

**New Mexico 2003
Economic Impacts of National Park System***

Unit	Recreation Visits	Total Visitor Spending	Average Spending Per Party Day	Local Jobs Created	Personal Income Generated
Aztec Ruins NM	42,493	\$1,160	\$79	28	\$490
Bandelier NM	287,096	\$11,110	\$88	271	\$4,730
Capulin Volcano NM	61,373	\$1,320	\$59	33	\$460
Carlsbad Caverns NP	457,631	\$18,920	\$87	460	\$8,060
Chaco Culture NHP	84,621	\$1,800	\$52	43	\$750
El Malpais NM	151,127	\$4,860	\$78	123	\$1,720
El Morro NM	57,889	\$1,780	\$75	45	\$630
Fort Union NM	12,944	\$260	\$47	9	\$90
Gila Cliff Dwellings NM	47,869	\$1,090	\$56	28	\$390
Pecos NHP	38,326	\$710	\$54	19	\$260
Petroglyph NM	58,101	\$2,170	\$90	52	\$1,050
Salinas Pueblo Missions NM	33,827	\$1,090	\$78	28	\$390
White Sands NM	492,008	\$21,630	\$118	585	\$8,100
Totals	1,825,305	\$67,900	\$74	1,724	\$27,120

* Economic impacts where estimated using the MSU Money Generation Model (MGM2).

Utah 2003
Economic Impacts of National Park System*

Unit	Recreation Visits	Total Visitor Spending	Average Spending Per Party Day	Local Jobs Created	Personal Income Generated
Arches NP	757,781	\$63,750	\$172	1,757	\$24,650
Bryce Canyon NP	903,760	\$40,690	\$78	1,081	\$15,040
Canyonlands NP	386,986	\$16,390	\$71	417	\$5,790
Capitol Reef NP	535,441	\$23,180	\$76	615	\$8,550
Cedar Breaks NM	569,455	\$17,570	\$62	461	\$6,420
Dinosaur NM	289,849	\$9,000	\$58	228	\$3,180
Glen Canyon NRA	1,876,984	\$108,530	\$77	2,564	\$45,270
Golden Spike NHS	45,230	\$1,990	\$89	50	\$870
Hovenweep NM	29,737	\$1,320	\$87	33	\$570
Natural Bridges NM	98,874	\$4,390	\$87	109	\$1,900
Rainbow Bridge NM	98,865	\$4,360	\$89	109	\$1,890
Timpanogos Cave NM	106,030	\$6,070	\$115	144	\$2,940
Zion NP	2,458,792	\$80,900	\$86	1,935	\$33,830
Totals	8,157,784	\$378,140	\$88	9,503	\$150,900

* Economic impacts where estimated using the MSU Money Generation Model (MGM2).